



Legislative  
Service  
Bureau

# MINUTES

## International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council

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June 23, 1998

First Meeting of the 1997-1998 Biennium

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### MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Nancy Boettger, Chairperson  
Senator Sheldon Rittmer  
Senator Elaine Szymoniak

Representative Steve Churchill, Vice Chairperson  
Representative Paul Bell  
Representative Minnette Doderer  
Representative Jack Drake  
Representative Deo Koenigs  
Representative Beverly Nelson

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### MEETING IN BRIEF

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Minutes prepared by Patty Funaro,  
Senior Legal Counsel,  
(515) 281-3040

Organizational staffing by  
Diane Bolender, Director,  
Legislative Service Bureau,  
Patty Funaro, Senior Legal Counsel,  
Legislative Service Bureau, and  
Julie Livers, Director,  
Legislative Information Office,  
(515) 281-3566

1. **Procedural Business.**
  2. **Review of Committee Charge, Activities, and Finances.**
  3. **Recommendations.**
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### COMMITTEE BUSINESS

#### 1. **Procedural Business.**

**Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Nancy Boettger at 9:10 a.m. in Room 118 of the Statehouse and was adjourned at 10:25 a.m. Chairperson Boettger and Vice Chairperson Steve Churchill welcomed the members of the

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## **International Relations Committee of the Legislative Council**

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Committee and noted the economic, cultural, and personal benefits of promoting state international relations activities.

### **2. Review of the Charge, Activities, and Finance.**

Ms. Diane Bolender, Director, Legislative Service Bureau, provided an overview of the history of the Committee, which was established by the Legislative Council in December 1992 and began its work during the 1993 Interim. She noted that the charge of the Committee includes promoting interpersonal interaction between state legislators and legislative staff and international visitors, providing instruction about state and local democratic institutions, and developing trade in foreign markets. The establishment of the Committee was precipitated by legislative exchanges with dignitaries from the Russian Federation and the Russian Republic; a forum for German Marshall Fund Fellows from Germany, France, Hungary, and Poland; and the hosting of international fellows sponsored by the Asia Foundation. Ms. Bolender also provided a summary of additional international activities to date.

Ms. Julie Livers, Director, Legislative Information Office, provided information regarding other entities in the state which participate in international activities including the Iowa Sister States, the Iowa Council for International Understanding, the Iowa Peace Institute, the Iowa Department of Economic Development, and others. Ms. Livers summarized various recent and pending visits of international visitors, including a visit of a delegation from the Veneto Region of Italy which will take place June 29 through July 4, 1998. Members of the Committee shared some of their experiences in international activities and stressed the importance of proper recognition of international visitors including presentation of gifts.

Ms. Bolender reviewed the financial status of the International Relations Committee, noting that of the \$10,000 authorized for international gifts by the Legislative Council for the two-year period beginning July 1, 1996, and ending June 30, 1998, \$1,504.04 had been expended and that none of the \$15,000 authorized for international travel had been expended.

The Committee determined that appropriate gifts should be available for international visitors and that the Committee and the General Assembly should be more actively involved in international relations activities. The Committee agreed to meet on a more frequent basis, including prior to the arrival of international visitors, to coordinate efforts.

The Committee discussed the importance of enhancing the coordination of efforts of various state agencies and others involved with international relations. Ms. Livers noted that the goals of the various state agencies may differ and that this variation determines the extent of coordination of international activities and the types of activities.

### **3. Recommendations.**

Following discussion, the Committee submitted the attached report for approval by the Legislative Council, and the Legislative Council approved the report at its subsequent meeting.